

Chapter 8: Transportation

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Transportation

Chapter 8

Transportation

Charles County's transportation system requires special consideration for growth management. This element of the Comprehensive Plan sets the transportation framework for the County's growth management efforts. Background for transportation planning is provided through an assessment of the existing transportation network, highway capacity, and planned improvements to identify the issues, problems and opportunities. Finally, this element develops short and long term strategies to satisfy Charles County's 2040 transportation needs.

Goals and Objectives

Overarching goal

- 8.1 Develop, maintain and enhance a multi-modal transportation system to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods on both an inter- and intra- County basis. This will include short, medium and long term transportation planning.

Roadway Network/Capacity

- 8.2 Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service.
- 8.3 Support regional roadway projects to reduce congestion, and promote commerce and economic development.
- 8.4 Provide the public with adequate transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development in appropriate locations to continue in the County.
- 8.5 Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic.
- 8.6 Create greater circulation through road network connectivity, both in redevelopment areas as well as in new development areas between new and existing neighborhoods.

Land Use

- 8.7 Concentrate 75% of residential development in the Development District which includes development density and intensity in mixed use districts in the Transit Corridor to help limit and manage the spread of traffic congestion and encourage and support alternate modes of transportation.
- 8.8 Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County.
- 8.9 Where possible, encourage and promote Transit Oriented Development within the established Waldorf Transit Corridor in order to support the planned fixed-route, high-capacity transit service from the Branch Avenue Metro-rail station to Waldorf-White Plains, as well as support the urbanization of Waldorf.
- 8.10 Ensure new development and redevelopment projects do not degrade the adequacy of receiving transportation facilities, or provide the appropriate improvements to mitigate for their impacts.

- 8.11 Require development to reserve and dedicate to the County the right-of-way for roads, park and ride facilities, and the planned fixed-route high-capacity transit service within the established Waldorf Transit Corridor.

Transit

- 8.12 Support local, regional and commuter transit trips to improve roadway congestion, including park and ride facilities
- 8.13 Support and promote the preservation of the locally preferred high-capacity fixed-route transit alignment as designated in the Maryland Transit Administration's Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study. Ensure that facilities for pedestrian, bicycle and daily parking are considered and included in capital and development projects as appropriate, particularly in the vicinity of proposed transit station locations.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities

- 8.14 Support the implementation of the Charles County Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, which will provide adequate and safe recreational and functional transportation connections between residential, employment, recreational, shopping and transit centers.
- 8.15 Ensure that all development projects construct the designated amenities described in the Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan that pass through or are immediately adjacent to the proposed development or redevelopment sites.
- 8.16 Ensure development projects provide sidewalk, shared-use path, and trail connections to promote the expansion of the bicycle and pedestrian facility network.

Issues and Policy Considerations

Charles County's transportation system for the year 2040 requires special consideration in view of several issues:

- Local and regional motor vehicle traffic continues to increase. The primary effects of this are felt in the Development District where a high volume of traffic, both local and through traffic is traveling on the few roads that run east-west and north-south through the area.
- The capacity of the County's arterial highways is a key to growth management of the County and should be carefully conserved. This implies strict access control and residential and non-residential design standards that emphasize internal circulation systems.
- Development along the US 301, MD 5, MD 5 Business, MD 210, and MD 228 corridors continues to threaten safe and efficient operation along these routes. Congestion along these corridors is not solely the product of increasing traffic volume, but also of conflicting turning movements at intersections and driveways.
- In the Development District and other growth areas, pre-planned expansion of the highway system is required to ensure that the function and viability of the growth centers do not negatively impact traffic.
- The potential reduction in federal funding for transportation projects places more financial responsibility at the state and local levels, as well as on private developers, to fund new transportation projects, roadways, roadway improvements, and transit service.

- With increased road congestion, high fuel prices, and concerns over the impacts of transportation on climate change, a multi-modal and inter-modal system will be needed to serve the County's future transportation needs.
- Commuter transit is limited by constrained funding from the Federal and State government modal agencies, resulting in greater competition across Maryland jurisdictions for those limited transit funds. This creates a greater need for Charles County to be more competitive by implementing high-density, transit-oriented development in the urban center of Waldorf.
- A fixed-route, high-capacity transit service linking Charles County to the metropolitan Washington, D.C. Metro System requires passage through Prince George's County. Increased coordination and partnership is needed with Prince George's County staff and elected officials to align transportation goals and priorities. This includes preservation of highway corridors and the designated transit alignment and funding the local portion of the various stages of the Federal Transit project development process.
- Beyond a strict capacity-based approach to highway systems evaluations, the community character impacts of roads and traffic also need to be considered. This is particularly true in the highway corridor within the redevelopment area of Development District as well as rural villages where historically development has been highway oriented. Within the redevelopment corridor (Waldorf Urban zones) of the Development District, development will need to be re-oriented to an urban design in order to better manage roadway access and improve traffic flow. Both the state and federal government have also begun adjusting road clarifications and standards to permit design more context sensitive roads that fit and contribute to community character. This flexibility is an important toll in creating distinctive communities with a high quality of life.
- The private sector will increasingly be part of the solution of transportation issues, including financing and other transportation system modifications.

Transportation Planning Concepts

Some planning and capacity analysis concepts provide useful background to understanding transportation policy: transportation modes, level of service, and functional classification.

Transportation Modes

A transportation mode is a means of transportation, such as motor vehicle, bus, bicycle, or walking. A multi-modal and inter-modal system will be needed to serve the County's future transportation needs. A multi-modal transportation system is comprised of highway, transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, airport and rail facilities; together with interconnections between each mode.

Since the early 1990s when Congress passed the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act (ISTEA), there has been strong emphasis on developing a multi-modal and intermodal transportation system that is economically efficient and environmentally sound, and that focuses on the efficient movement of people and goods, rather than vehicles.

Capacity

Capacity is a measure of traffic flow that can be accommodated on a given segment of road or at an intersection of two or more roads. Because traffic facilities tend to operate poorly at or near

capacity, and are not usually designed or planned to operate in this range, level of service is used in the analysis of capacity.

Level of Service

Level of service is a qualitative measure of operating conditions which a driver will experience while traveling on a particular roadway segment or through an intersection. Level of service reflects driver satisfaction with the following factors that influence the degree of congestion: speed and travel time, traffic interruptions, freedom to maneuver, safety, driving comfort and convenience, and delays. The following six levels of service are used to describe highway flow conditions:

LOS A represents a free flow where individual users are virtually unaffected by others in the traffic stream. LOS A describes a condition with low traffic volumes and high speeds with little or no delays. There is little or no restriction in maneuverability due to the presence of other vehicles. Drivers can maintain their desired speeds and can proceed through signals without having to wait unnecessarily;

LOS B is in the range of stable flow, but the presence of other users in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable. LOS B affords above the average conditions, and is typically used for design or evaluation of rural highways;

LOS C is also in the range of stable flows, but marks the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream. LOS C is normally utilized as a measure of "average conditions" for design of facilities in suburban and urban locations. It is also considered acceptable in rural locations;

LOS D represents high density, but stable flow. Speed and freedom to maneuver are severely restricted and the driver experiences a generally poor level of comfort. Small increases in traffic flow will generally cause operational problems at this level. LOS D is considered acceptable during short periods of time and is often used in large urban areas;

LOS E represents operating conditions at or near the capacity level. Operations at this level are usually unstable, because small increases in flow or minor perturbations within the traffic stream will cause breakdowns.

LOS F is used to define forced or breakdown flow. This condition exists wherever the amount of traffic approaching a point exceeds the amount which can traverse the point and queues form behind the point. LOS F is characterized by demand volumes greater than the roadway capacity as complete congestion occurs and, in an extreme case, the volume passing a given point drops to zero. Under these conditions motorists seek other routes in order to bypass congestion, thus impacting adjacent streets.

Levels of service are often utilized as measures of system performance in transportation planning analysis to define public policy concerning highway performance. They are also used in traffic impact analysis to determine local traffic impacts of proposed developments (see Adequate Public Facilities Requirements, below in this chapter). Definitions of level of service differ for intersections and roadway segments, for city streets, and for controlled access highways. In urban and suburban areas, where intersections are closely spaced, traffic signals usually govern arterial and street capacity. US 301 in the Waldorf area is an example of this situation. Thus, in

urban and suburban locations, roadway adequacy is addressed at intersections in the traffic impact analysis process.

Functional Classification

Functional classification, relates a particular highway facility to the type of service it is intended to provide. Charles County is served by approximately 1,100 miles of highways, of which the County maintains approximately 700 miles. Each highway is categorized according to the County's functional classification system that categorizes a facility according to the type of service it is intended to provide. The type of service varies according to the type of trip, including local versus through trips, and magnitude of trips accommodated on a facility. The following are definitions and characterizations of the highway functional classifications:

Principal Arterial	Carries a high volume of traffic for interstate and intrastate travel, as well as inter-county travel. Also serves the major centers of activity of the urbanized area. Flow is usually uninterrupted from origin to destination.
Intermediate Arterial	Carries a high volume of traffic for travel within the county, or for travel to and from adjacent counties. Usually provides a connection to the Principal Arterial. Traffic on this type of road normally has the right-of-way. Controls are used only in areas of high hazard.
Minor Arterial	Carries moderate to high volume of traffic usually for travel within the County. These roads normally serve the higher classification roads providing access to and from the arterials.
Major Collector	Links the arterial system to lower classified roadways. Collects and distributes traffic. Auxiliary lanes for turning traffic are usually provided along the Major Collector. Access is not directly from this road but from a sub-road connected to the collector. They may serve community shopping areas, schools, parks, and cluster developments.
Minor Collector	Serves intra-community travel at a traffic volume lower than that of a Major Collector.
Local	Provides direct access to abutting properties; designed to handle relatively low traffic volumes.

Existing Conditions and Trends

Roads, Motor Vehicle Traffic

Traffic Volumes

Traffic volumes on state roads in Charles County have fluctuated considerably since 2003 (the data used in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan). While volumes increased in some locations between 2003 and 2011 compared to between 1994 and 2003, in others they dropped or increased at a much slower pace. Traffic volumes for major highways in 2011 are shown on

Figure 8-1. Volumes from 1994 to 2011 for locations representative of major highway routes for commuting and regional traffic are shown on Table 8-1.

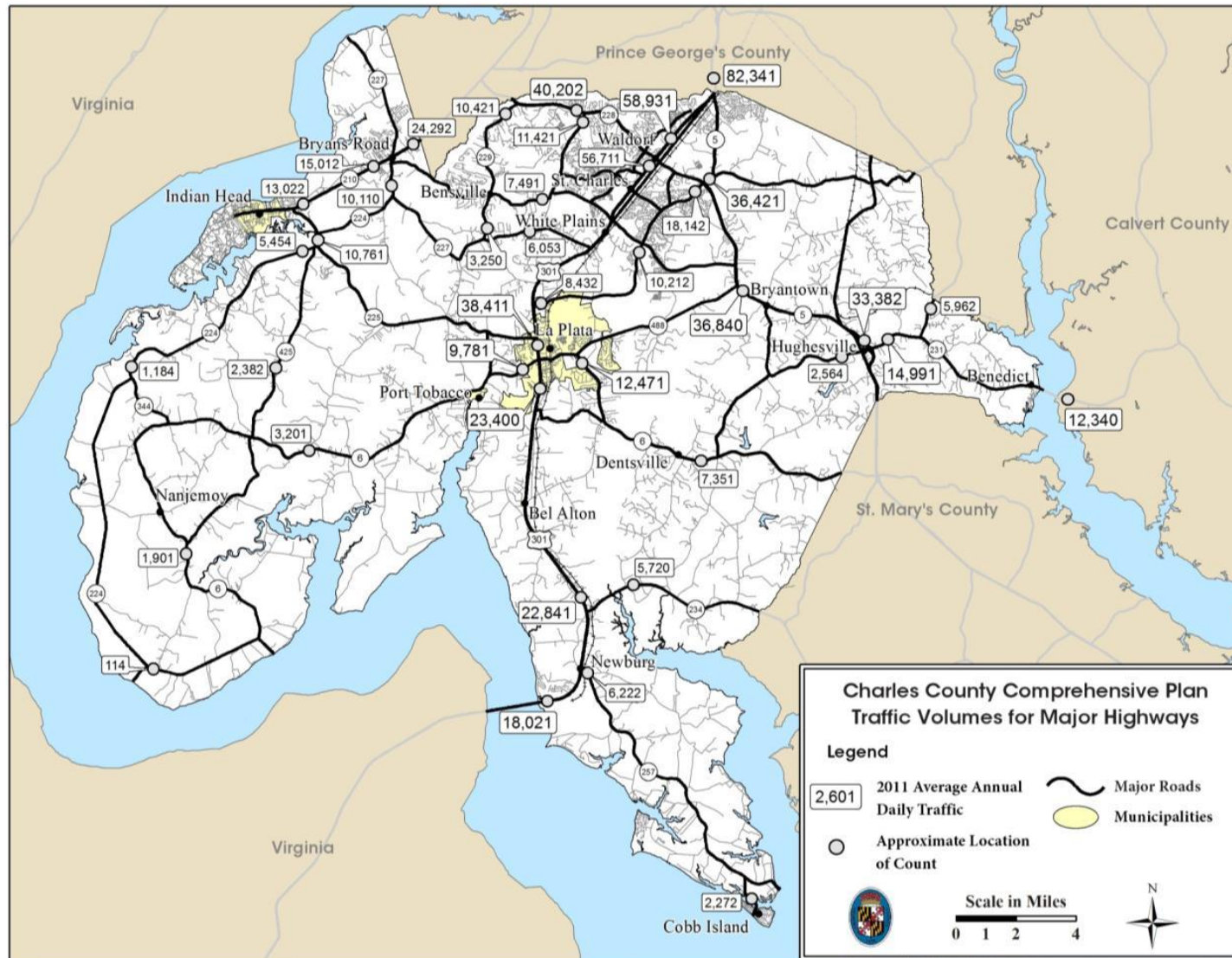
Total Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) on US 301 just north of the Charles County/Prince George's County line exceeded 82,000 vehicles per day in 2011, reflecting the importance of this route as a major connector to Prince George's County, and as a commuter route to work locations in Washington D.C., Northern Virginia, and points north of the County. While this location had a 23 percent increase between 1994 and 2003, volumes increased only one percent between 2003 and 2011.

Table 8-1 Traffic Counts for Major Selected Roads, 1994 to 2011

Location	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)						
	1994	2003	2011	Change			
				1994 to 2003		2003 to 2011	
	Number	Number	Number	Number	%	Number	%
US 301 north of Prince George's County line	66,375	81,325	82,341	14,950	23	1,016	1
US 301 north of MD 228	45,350	57,350	58,931	12,000	26	1,581	3
US 301 La Plata	30,950	33,575	38,411	2,625	8	4,836	14
US 301 at Nice Bridge	13,804	16,643	18,021	2,839	21	1,378	8
MD 210 north of Bryans Road	17,576	27,675	24,292	10,099	57	-3,383	-12
MD 5 east of MD 488	28,450	42,775	36,840	14,325	50	-5,935	-14

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, Traffic Volume Maps

Figure 8-1 Traffic Volumes for Major Highways



Traffic volumes on US 301 in La Plata and at the Nice Bridge increased an average of over 10 percent both between 1994 and 2003 and between 2003 and 2011. MD 210 just south of the Prince George's County line experienced a 57 percent increase in traffic volume between 1994 and 2003, but volume fell by approximately 3,400 vehicles (12%) between 2003 and 2011.

The reasons for the apparently reduced rate of traffic volume increases warrant close attention. Causes could include the recent recession, increase in commuter bus use, the effect of added system capacity due to new roads such as Rosewick Road/St. Charles Parkway, and drivers avoiding state highways in favor of other roads.

Commuter Patterns

Although work trips only represent a portion of all trip purposes, they occur during times of the day when transportation facilities are most heavily used. Of the 61,698 commuters who resided in Charles County in 2000, 36,898 (60 percent) commuted to work outside of the county and 24,800 (40 percent) commuted within the county. Approximately 11,420 workers commuted into Charles County. Compared to 1990 commuter data, the share of workers working outside the County increased slightly from 58 percent in 1990 to 60 percent in 2000.¹

The greatest number of commuters leaving Charles County are destined for job locations in Prince George's County (13,834 commuters or 38 percent). An additional 29 percent commute to Washington D.C. Of the 11,420 commuters who travel into Charles County from other locations, the largest percentage (32 percent) originate from Prince George's County. An additional 29 percent originate from St. Mary's County.

A key factor for the existing and projected transportation congestion is the imbalance between the number of jobs and the number of households in Southern Maryland. Major highways in the region experience congestion each day because they are used by commuters to access jobs in the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area to the north. These numbers are expected to increase significantly through 2040. This trend has been consistent since the 1990s, and was documented in the 2008 U.S. 301 Transportation Study. Within the immediate US 301 Study Area, generally outside of the Capital Beltway and south of US 50, the Study's Task Force found that the number of households was projected to grow by about 90 percent, while the number of jobs was projected to grow by only 50 percent. This projected growth imbalance would create a 450 percent increase in the number of daily trips across the Charles-Calvert County border with Prince George's County. The Task Force determined that improving the jobs/housing imbalance would do more to reduce congestion than any single transportation construction project.

Ridesharing/Commuter Assistance Services

The Regional Ridesharing Program of Southern Maryland provides a computerized match list for carpool/vanpool/commuter bus schedules, rates, and services information for residents and employees of Charles County. The Program also provides information on commuter bus schedules, rates and other transportation services for the region and commuting to Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia, and suburban Maryland.

¹ As of 2012, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) was preparing to re-survey commute patterns in Charles County; however, the revised data were not available for inclusion in the 2012 Comprehensive Plan. The County has not observed any significant shift in overall commute patterns (i.e., percentages of commuters) since 2000.

Adequate Public Facilities Requirements

Adequate Public Facilities (APF) requirements were added to the Charles County Zoning Ordinance in 1992. An Adequate Public Facilities Manual was adopted in 1997 and updated in 2008 and 2011. Under the APF Requirements, most subdivision, site plan, or zoning permit applications must submit an Adequate Public Facilities study to the County that includes the proposed development's impact on transportation facilities. Developers must demonstrate that adequate infrastructure and services exist, are part of an approved CIP project, or will be provided through a mitigation strategy to serve the new development. A facility is considered inadequate if the proposed development would cause the LOS to drop below the standards in Table 8-2.

Table 8-2 APF Level of Service Standards

Comprehensive Plan District	Peak hour
Development District	C
Town Centers/Urban Core	D
Village Centers	C
Rural/Agricultural Conservation District and Others	B

Source: Adequate Public Facilities Manual, 2011

Access Controls

Access controls along a roadway serve to maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system. Access controls are particularly important in the Development District where the County is targeting 75% new growth to ensure that the road system meets the demands of the growing population. By implementing access controls, either through partial control of access or access management, the County can prevent the proliferation of driveways and individual access points which intensify traffic hazards and adversely affect the function of arterial and major collector roads. Once effective access controls have been implemented, and the number of conflict points has been minimized, the roadway system will allow for higher speeds, fewer delays, and improved safety at a lower capital investment than the construction of a new highway.

Access management plans for several roads have been developed and, based on these plans, tables in the County Road Ordinance designate access point locations for existing and future development. Roads with completed plans are:

- Billingsley Road
- Middletown Road
- St. Charles Parkway/Rosewick Road
- Western Parkway

Partial Control of Access

Partial control of access involves limiting access points along a roadway to only public roads either at an at-grade intersection or a grade separated interchange. All private driveways and entrances directly on the roadway are eliminated or tied into either a public road or a service road. Under Maryland law, property owners immediately adjacent to a highway have the right to

direct access to a highway. This right may be acquired from the property owners by one of the following methods:

- When a parcel is located along a secondary road, access from the primary road may be purchased, and access to the property is shifted onto the adjacent roadway.
- When the parcel is not located adjacent to another roadway, a service road may be constructed to provide access.
- If a parcel is land-locked and it is not feasible to construct a service road, the parcel would need to be acquired.

Access Management

Access Management involves controlling traffic movements and the spacing, design, location and number of access points along a roadway to manage access to adjacent land uses while simultaneously preserving the flow of traffic on the roadway system. Effective access management improves the safety and capacity along densely developed roadways by reducing the friction between local and through traffic.

Access management regulations in the highway corridor overlay zone section of the zoning ordinance currently apply to US 301, MD 5, MD 210, MD 5 Business, and MD 228. These regulations include standards for minimum driveway spacing, driveway widths, access locations, turning lanes and for the reservation of right-of-way for service roads within the corridors.

Charles County and SHA coordinate access management on a case-by-case basis for new development and redevelopment projects. There are several good examples of where access management has been implemented along US 301. South of Plaza Drive the majority of the businesses along US 301 are accessed either from the internal circulation road for the St. Charles Towne Center or from adjacent roads such as St. Patrick's Drive and Smallwood Drive. The few access points which are directly on US 301 along this segment (northbound side of US 301, north of Smallwood Drive) are shared between several businesses and the parking lots are connected allowing cars to travel from one to another without traveling on US 301. North of MD 228 along US 301 there are many examples where no access management has taken place. Access drives are located very close together with two or more per business.

The County will continue to coordinate with the SHA on access management programs along US 301, MD 228, MD 5, MD 5 Business, and MD 210.

US 301

During the 1990s, the US 301 Transportation Study Task Force analyzed partial control of access options along the US 301 corridor. The Task Force proposed that partial control of access programs be implemented along the entire length of US 301, from US 50 to the Potomac River, except for built-up commercial areas such as Waldorf and La Plata. In these built-up commercial areas, an overwhelming number of access points already exist and the building setbacks do not allow enough right-of-way to construct service roads. In these areas the Task Force recommended an access management program.

In 2002 the County Commissioners' Comprehensive Transportation Strategy endorsed Alternative 1A for US 301 which would upgrade key intersections along US 301 in Waldorf without denying access to local businesses between interchanges.

The 2002 Transportation Strategy also included preservation of right-of-way for a western US 301 bypass. This 2012 Comprehensive Plan does not include the western bypass (see below). As a result US 301 will continue to serve both regional and local traffic and means that access control policy along US 301 may need to be revised.

Local Traffic Safety Plan

The Charles County Traffic Safety Committee was formed to evaluate transportation problem areas and provide recommendations to the County Commissioners for authorization of the improvements. The committee is comprised of transportation planners and engineers, local police and safety personnel, and road maintenance officials. Citizens, elected officials, and staff may request the Traffic Safety Committee to review an identified issue or potential problem area. Some examples include, traffic signal requests, a review of roadway safety hazard areas or locations, and other traffic control problems. The Committee findings are presented to the requestor or the County Commissioners if funding is needed. The Committee also performs a cursory technical review of an issue to determine if further technical study is necessary to complete the evaluation.

To identify potential problem areas, the State Highway Administration monitors motor vehicle crashes that occur at each at-grade intersection on the state maintained highway system. Each year they develop a list of high crash intersections for each county. This list enables the County Government and the SHA to prioritize where intersection improvements are required.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities can be an important element of the transportation network. Under previous Comprehensive Plans, conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists in Charles County were considered poor. However, under the County's Subdivision Regulation requirements, most new development is required to install pedestrian and bicycle amenities within the proposed community, and off-site connections to nearby facilities, where feasible. St. Charles has a well-developed system of sidewalks and "hiker-biker" trails that are interconnected among neighborhoods and commercial shopping areas. However, safe crossings of major roads are lacking in the older communities. Some of Waldorf's older residential neighborhoods, such as Pinefield and White Oak Village and an increasing number of new ones also have sidewalks. However, they tend to serve only the individual neighborhoods, and do not interconnect with each other to form a true network. Charles County's rural roads are attractive to bicyclists and recreational bicycling is popular. Rural roads with shoulders and/or low traffic volumes are the most attractive but many have hazards such as narrow horizontal sections, lack of paved shoulders, narrow bridges, poor shoulder maintenance (with debris collecting in the shoulders) and, on occasion, hostility from motorists.

In 2002, bicycle lanes and a pedestrian trail were incorporated into the upgrade for Middletown Road, the first County road to be built with these facilities. A considerable amount of pedestrian and bicycle facility planning has been undertaken in Charles County:

- Bryans Road – Indian Head Sub-Area Plan pedestrian-bicycle element
- Waldorf Sub-Area Plan pedestrian-bicycle element
- Southern Maryland Trails and Bikeways Study (SMRTABS), a regional on- and off-road trails study.

- Feasibility Study for four trail alignments: Mattawoman Trail, US Navy Railroad Trail (NSWC trail), Popes Creek Railroad Trail, and Gilbert Run Trail.
- Charles County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, April 2012. A complete listing and discussion of related studies and plans is detailed in that Plan.

Transit Planning

Charles County has the fastest growing commuter bus ridership numbers in the State of Maryland. Due to heavily congested roadways to the metropolitan Washington, D.C. region, a great number of county and regional commuters have moved to public transit service as means of getting to and from their places of work. Transit services currently consist of County operated local bus service and commuter bus services operated by the Maryland Transit Administration. With immense growth experienced since the 1990s, the Commuter Bus Service has struggled to keep pace with the growth in patrons, leading to over-crowded busses, lack of available parking at local park-and-rides, and overwhelming service demand.

In 1996, the Southern Maryland Mass Transportation Alternatives Study examined the regional needs and the various options to serve the area demands, resulting in the highly demanded commuter bus service. As this over-the-road motor coach service continually expanded, the state legislature funded the 2004 MD 5/US 301 Transit Services Staging Plan (TSSP) through the Maryland Transit Administration. The TSSP analyzed the steps envisioned to transition from the Commuter Bus service to various high-capacity, fixed-route transit services to serve the growing demand. In partnership with Charles and Prince George's Counties, this study analyzed the potential alternatives and a potential progression of higher capacity transit services. The study consisted of an overall review and cost analysis of Enhanced Commuter Bus (express service with limited stops), Moderate-level Bus Rapid Transit (mix of shared and exclusive bus lanes with limited stops), High-level Bus Rapid Transit (exclusive bus lanes with grade-separation at intersections), and Light Rail Transit (fixed-route rail service with grade-separation at intersections). The study concluded that Enhanced Commuter bus Service be the short term focus (through 2015), with a progression to Bus Rapid Transit or Light Rail Transit as the market progressed.

The Maryland State Legislature and the Maryland Department of Transportation continued to realize the transit demand in Southern Maryland. Additional studies of the regional transportation needs ensued to fully evaluate the short-term and long-term needs of the region. These studies included:

- Southern Maryland Transportation Needs Assessment, 2009 (Commission to Study Southern Maryland Transportation Needs, with the Tri-county Council for Southern Maryland and Maryland Department of Transportation)
- Southern Maryland Mass Transportation Analysis, 2010 (Maryland Transit Administration).

Beyond the TSSP and these other regional studies, transit ridership continued to exceed expectations and push the demand for higher capacity transit in Charles County. Based on this demand and continued growth pressures in the area, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) evaluated the necessary fixed-route path for a high capacity transit service from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains. The 2010 Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study analyzed the critical path to establishing a corridor alignment necessary for

protection of encroachment. In joint cooperation with Charles and Prince George's Counties, the MTA evaluated several alternatives based on their functionality, environmental impacts, property impacts, and costs. Both Counties unanimously selected a preferred alignment, which was adopted in the local planning documents for preservation.

In 2010, the Charles County Commissioners unanimously approved the highest transportation priority for Charles County as the creation of a fixed-route, high-capacity transit service (Light Rail) from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains. To support the development of the Light Rail alignment, Charles County made significant strides to establish a base for high-capacity transit service to Waldorf and White Plains. The Waldorf Urban Design Study (WUDS) designated a 300-acre redevelopment area, with high-density mixed use development, including transit stations, structured parking, urban streetscapes, and parks. The new zoning and design code enabled the densities and floor area ratios necessary to qualify for the Federal Transit Administration's New Start and Small Start programs. The County has worked with the Maryland Department of Transportation to include the project in the State's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), necessary to initiate the next phases of the project development.

In November 2011, the Prince George's County Council signed a Resolution to declare this project as a transportation priority for their County and their renewed commitment to high-capacity transit and the associated land-uses to create the needed ridership. To enhance this regional support, the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland designated this project as the number one regional transit priority for Southern Maryland. This project has further received the support of the County's Federal representatives and State Delegation in an effort to bring federal funding for this project to fruition.

Bus Service

Bus service is increasing in importance in Charles County especially in the La Plata/Waldorf areas. Both commuter and regular bus service is available. Bus service offers flexible public transit in the short and medium time frame. In the near and mid-term enhanced bus service is needed to support the projected ridership until fixed rail transit is built.

Commuter Bus Service

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) operates five routes in Charles County. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) operates one route (Table 8-3 and Figure 8-2)

Table 8-3 Commuter Bus Routes Serving Charles County

				Trips per day (2012)
Route		From	To	
MTA	901	La Plata/Waldorf	Washington D.C.	61
	903	Charlotte Hall/Waldorf	Washington D.C.	14
	905	Charlotte Hall/Waldorf	Washington D.C.	47
	906	Waldorf	Washington D.C.	12
	907	La Plata/Waldorf	Washington D.C.	16
WMATA	W19	Indian Head	Southern Avenue Metrorail	31

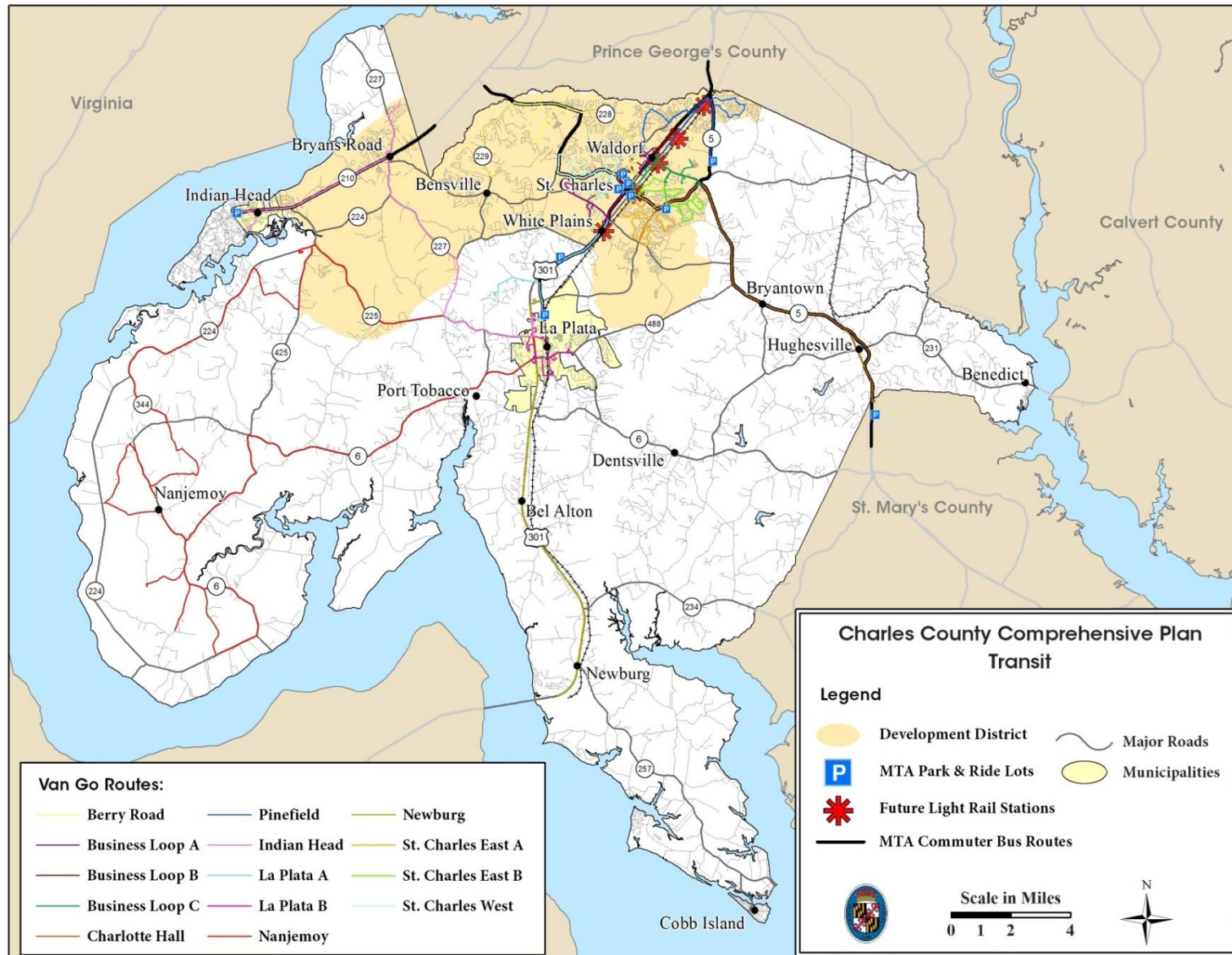
Sources: Maryland Transit Administration and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, 2012

Local Bus Service

The Charles County Department of Community Services has been providing public transportation since 1986. Two bus services are offered:

- General Public Transit (VanGO): Deviated fixed service provides transportation throughout the County to shopping and business centers primarily within the Waldorf/St. Charles and La Plata areas (see Figure 8-2).
- Demand Response Service: Utilizes paratransit vehicles to provide general transportation for senior citizens and disabled persons.

Figure 8-2 Transit



Ridership increased 90 percent between FY 2004 and FY 2012 (Table 8-4). A large proportion of the increased ridership is related to medical related trips. This is partially due to an agreement with the local Health Department and changes in Medicare/Medicaid rules. In Charles County a significant proportion of the demand response trips are for dialysis treatment transportation.

Table 8-4 VanGO Ridership

	Annual Ridership			
	FY 1998	FY 2001	FY 2004	FY 2012
Fixed/Deviated Fixed Route	42,360	146,326	388,587	744,516
Demand Responsive	18,460	20,336	19,288	29,413
Total Ridership	60,820	166,662	407,875	733,929

Sources: Charles County Transportation Development Plan, Final Report, Maryland Transit Administration, 2012.

Park-and-Ride Lots

Park-and-ride lots help decrease traffic congestion and improve air quality. Park and ride lots provide convenient transfer points for carpools, van pools, and commuter buses, and are located in the following eight locations (Figure 8-2):

- MD 5 (Mattawoman-Beantown Road)
- La Plata/Washington Avenue
- US 301 at Smallwood Drive
- South Potomac Church
- Smallwood Drive/MD 925 (planned for 2013)
- St. Charles Towne Center
- Smallwood Village
- St. Charles Plaza
- Blue Crabs Stadium

Freight Rail Service

The only freight rail service in the County is provided by the Pope's Creek Branch of CSX. A spur from Brandywine to Chalk Point runs through eastern Charles County north of Hughesville. The Potomac Electric Power Company is a chief user of these railroad lines transporting coal to its Chalk Point and Morgantown power plants.

There is currently no commuter rail service in Charles County. There is strong interest in light rail service, and it has been the subject of considerable planning both in Charles and Prince George's County (see below under transit planning).

Air transportation

National and international airlines operate from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Dulles International Airport, and Baltimore Washington International Airport (32, 54, and 65 miles from La Plata, respectively). Maryland Airport, a small local privately owned airport at Pomomkey provides charter service for Charles County. The airport is currently under construction lengthening its runways to service corporate jets and offers that county an opportunity for additional economic development (see Chapter 7, Economic Development).

Water transportation

There are presently no commercial port facilities located in Charles County; however, there is a barge off-loading facility for coal at the Morgantown Power Generation Facility in Newburg, located along the Potomac River. The power plant receives coal by barge in order to reduce its freight rail costs. The Port of Baltimore, about 65 miles north of the County, is the closest major port facility. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains navigable waters in the Potomac River and at the mouth of several rivers along the southern and western boundary of Charles County.

Transportation System 2040

Future Highway Improvements

This section identifies future highway system improvements to roads in Charles County. The improvements are listed on Table 8-5 and are shown on Figures 8-3A and 8-3B. They are derived from the following sources:

Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). Each year the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) works with local officials and the public to determine priority County transportation projects. These projects are funded and are programmed in the MDOT's six-year Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP).

Charles County Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The five year budget and CIP is updated annually and is coordinated with the Comprehensive Plan and the CTP.

Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Highway Needs Inventory (HNI). The HNI identifies future highway improvements that warrant major construction or reconstruction. The HNI is not a construction program, and inclusion of a project on the HNI is not a commitment to implementation. Over time a project may move from the HNI to the CTP.

Charles County Planning Documents. The transportation elements of several Charles County and Town planning documents identify future highway system improvements (see list of adopted plans in Chapter 1).

The projects in Table 8-5 are divided into three categories:

- **Funded projects.** These projects are funded for construction in the CTP, the CIP, or by developers; denoted by an “F” on Table 8-5
- **Projects in active planning.** These are County projects are in the CTP, the CIP, or in the County Commissioners’ 2002 Transportation Strategy; denoted by an “A” on Table 8-5.
- **Longer range projects.** These projects derive from the HNI and Charles County Planning Documents. Table 5-3 identifies the source document(s) that provide a more detailed description of each project. These projects are; denoted by an “L” on Table 8-5.

On Table 5-4, projects to be done by the State are denoted by an “S”, projects by the County by a “C” and projects by the Town of La Plata by a “P”. The table also indicates where the project is on a pedestrian-bicycle route as shown on Figure 8-3. Table 8-5 does not include the following project types:

- Resurfacing and rehabilitation projects
- Streetscapes
- Safety/spot improvements
- Bridge projects
- Town of La Plata projects that are internal to the Town and do not affect the County.

Highway projects are identified in the following time frames:

- **Short:** 0 to 5 Years
- **Mid:** 5 to 10 Years
- **Long:** 10 or More Years

The Functional Classification Map for the year 2025 (Figure 8-4) results from the planned transportation improvements and implementation of the Plan's policies guiding future development. Table 8-6 lists the arterial and major collector roads by classification as defined above in this chapter. At the time of development the functional classification of a road is determined based on both its highway function and on traffic volume (see Section 72 of the County Subdivision Regulations). The County plans to develop a transportation model. Use of the model or changes in traffic conditions, patterns, or development may result in changes to the road classifications in Table 8-6.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The main barriers to creating a useful, functional pedestrian-bicycle network are distance and separation of uses, lack of pedestrian-bicycle facilities in commercial and employment areas, and the difficulty of safely crossing main roads. A pedestrian/bicycle network should provide continuous connections between residential, employment, recreational, shopping, and transit centers. These facilities must be designed to ensure the safety of the pedestrians and cyclists including adequate access across highways and bridges.

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
Funded Projects					
<i>County Projects</i>					
C-1	Old Washington Road	Reconstruct as Urban Major Collector from south of MD 5 Bus. to Substation Road	Waldorf Urban Transport. Improvement Plan (WUTIP), CIP	Yes	Short
C-2	Acton Lane (Central)	Reconstruct as Urban Major Collector from US 301 to CSX Right-of-Way, consistent with the Waldorf Sub Area Plan and WUTIP.	WUTIP, CIP	Yes	Short
C-3	Acton Lane (West)	Upgrade from Western Parkway northwest to the County line to improve capacity and safety.	CIP		Short
C-4	Acton Lane (East)	Construct as Urban Major Collector from CSX Right-of-Way to MD 5 Mattawoman Beantown Road, with connections to Post Office Road Extended and White Oak Road (See C-11)	1997 and 2006 Comprehensive Plans, Developer	Yes	Short
C-5	Billingsley Road	Corridor Study to evaluate safety and geometric improvements from Middletown Road to MD 227	CIP		Short
C-6	(project removed from funding)				
C-7	Western Parkway	New 4-lane arterial road between Acton Lane and US 301. To be built in phases: Phase II Acton Lane to Pierce Road Phase III Pierce Road to US 301	CIP	Yes	Short
C-8	Mill Hill Road	Extension from Davis Road to Smallwood Dr. West (see CIP Project #C-21).	CIP	Yes	Short
C-9	McDaniel Rd	Reconstruct as major collector and extend from Hallmark Lane to Constitution Drive.	1997 Comprehensive Plan, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan, Developer,	Yes	Short
C-10	Demarr Road	Improve US 301 Demarr Road intersection & reconstruct roadway as major collector (White Plains Business Park & future Transit Oriented Development).	CIP, Developer	Yes	Short
C-11	Post Office Road Extended	Extension of Post Office Road from MD 5 Bus. to north of Acton Lane (East) as a major collector (formerly Eastern Parkway, 1997 Comprehensive Plan) with major collector connections to White Oak Road and MD 5 via Acton Lane.	1997 and 206 Comprehensive Plans, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan, WUDS, CIP, Developer	Yes	Mid

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
C-12	Demarr Road	Reconstruct Demarr Road to provide adequate access for industry-related traffic as a major collector.	CIP		Short
C-13	Middletown Road	Reconstruct from the completed section of the Cross County Connector to MD 227. Study to determine capacity /road design prior to design/construct.	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-14	Turkey Hill Road	Part 1: Reconstruct/realign from MD 227 to US 301. Study to determine alignment/capacity prior to design/construction Part 2: Realignment to eliminate sharp 90 degree bend.	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-15	Hamilton Road	Reconstruct between Western Parkway and Acton Lane. Complete feasibility study to determine necessary improvements prior to design/construction.	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-16	Holly Lane West	Extension/overpass between Post Office Road extended (former Eastern Parkway) and Western Parkway.	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-17	Radio Station Road	Reconstruct from MD 488 to Rosewick Road. Phase 1: Reconstruct as 4-lane boulevard; create 4-way intersection at Jaybee Lane (short term) Phase 2: Reconstruct as 4-lane parkway (long term)	CIP		Short Long
C-18	Stavors Road	Upgrade road to support traffic volumes & provide safety improvements.	CIP		Short
C-19	Bryans Road Town Common	Construct a traffic circle and green/park area in Bryans Road Town center.	CIP, State CTP		Short
Projects in Active Planning					
<i>State Projects</i>					
S-1	US 301 Corridor Study	Upgrade of existing US 301; interchanges along US 301 and at MD 5/St. Charles Parkway. Include consideration of additional lanes between Smallwood Drive and MD 227. Interim improvements needed to improve traffic flow; potential congestion management study.	CTP, US 301 Study; Comprehensive Plan.	Yes	Mid
S-2	MD 5 Bus. at Hughesville (Streetscape)	Construct streetscape on existing MD 5 Bus. (a.k.a. MD 625) consistent with Hughesville Revitalization Plan, to include parking, lighting, lane redesign and bike-ped accommodations.	Comprehensive Plan, CTP	Yes	Short

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
S-3 (not shown on Figure 8-3)	Intersection Evaluations	Evaluate the need for new traffic signals or intersection controls/modifications at County and/or State intersections.	Comprehensive Plan, CIP, CTP		On-going
County Projects					
C-20	Jaybee Lane	Rosewick Road to US 301. Upgrade to provide an alternative north-south route from US 301 into La Plata. Study to determine capacity /road design prior to design/construct.	Transportation Strategy, CIP	Yes	Mid
C-21	Smallwood Drive	Extension of Smallwood Drive between Middletown Road and Mill Hill Road. Envisioned in Waldorf Sub-Area Plan as a revision of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan project C-23 to extend Smallwood Drive to MD 228	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-22	Camp Hedges Place	Extension of Camp Hedges Place between MD 210 and MD 227. Developer built. Allows Marshall Hall traffic to bypass Bryans Road Town Center.	CIP, Developer	Yes	Mid
Longer Range Planning Projects					
State Projects					
S-4	MD 227	Reconstruct (2 lanes) between MD 210 and US 301. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Mid
S-5	MD 229	Reconstruct (2 lanes) between MD 227 and MD 228. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Mid
S-6	MD 5 – US 301	Construct an interchange	HNI		Mid
S-7	MD 5 – MD 5 Bus	Construct an interchange	HNI		Mid
S-8	MD 6 – US 301	Intersection improvements/reconstruction. Evaluate and accommodate lane capacity in all directions/approaches	HNI	Yes	Mid
S-9	US 301	Potomac River to south of La Plata - access control improvements	HNI		Long
S-10	MD 210	MD 225 to County line: divided highway reconstruct, access control improvements, auxiliary lanes, and intersection improvements	Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
S-11	MD 225	MD 210 to US 301: multi-lane reconstruct. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Long
S-12	MD 5	Between St. Mary's County line and MD 5 Business. Divided highway reconstruct with access control	HNI	Yes	Long
S-13	MD 6	MD 344 to east of Wards Run. Two-lane reconstruct. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Long
S-14	MD 425	Reconstruct (2 lanes) between MD 6 at Grayton (south of Nanjemoy) and MD 6 at Ironsides. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI		Long
S-15	MD 425	Reconstruct (2 lanes) between MD 224 and MD 6 at Ironsides. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI		Long
S-16	MD 257	Reconstruct from US 301 to MD 254. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long
S-17	MD 231	Reconstruct from Patuxent River Bridge (Benedict) to MD 5. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Long
S-18	MD 925	Increase capacity/reconstruct to Urban Major Collector from vicinity of Terrace Drive to MD 5 Business, consistent with the Waldorf Urban Transportation Improvement Plan.	Comprehensive Plan, WURC, WUTIP	Yes	Mid
S-19	MD 228	Feasibility Study to determine the design & impacts of a 6-lane reconstruction from MD 210 to US 301.	HNI	Yes	Mid
S-20	Governor Harry Nice Bridge	Replace bridge with 4 lane structure, including hiker/biker accommodations.	Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long
County Projects					
C-23	(project removed from funding)				
C-24	Substation Road	Reconstruct as an Urban Major Collector between US 301 and MD 5, consistent with the Waldorf Sub-Area Plan.	1997 Comprehensive Plan		Mid

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
C-25	Mitchell Rd	Reconstruct from US 301 to MD 225. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	1997 Comprehensive Plan		Mid
C-26	Piney Church Road	MD 488 to MD 5. Upgrade (4 lanes plus realignment)	1997 Comprehensive Plan, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan	Yes	Mid
C-27	Bumpy Oak Road	Reconstruct from MD 224 and MD 225. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	1997 Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Mid
C-28	Quailwood Parkway	Extend Quailwood Parkway between MD 225 and Rosewick Road.	1997 Comprehensive Plan. Vision Plan for Greater La Plata.		Long
C-29	Holly Tree Lane	Extension/overpass between Post Office Road extended (former Eastern Parkway) and Western Parkway. Holly Lane and Holly Tree Lane are envisioned as overpasses of US 301 (not an interchange) allowing local traffic to cross US 301 between interchanges. Extensions to new Post Office Road involve a railroad crossing. If this is not feasible, eastern terminus should be Old Washington Road.	1997 Comprehensive Plan, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan	Yes	Long
C-30	Poplar Hill Road	Reconstruct from MD 5 to Malcolm Road/Iowa Road. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	2006 Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long
C-31	Wheatley Road/Olivers Shop Road	Reconstruct from MD 6 and MD 231. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	2006 Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long
C-32	Gallant Green Road, Woodville Rd.	Reconstruct from MD 5 and Iowa Road. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	2006 Comprehensive Plan		Long
C-33	Penns Hill Road	Reconstruct from MD 234 to MD 6. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	2006 Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long

Town of La Plata Projects

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
LP-1	MD 6 to Rosewick Road (MD 6 connector)	New road between MD 6 and US 301 (Willow Lane to Heritage Green Pkwy.), with branch up to Rosewick Rd.	HNI, La Plata Comprehensive Plan, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan.	Yes	Mid
LP-2	Quailwood Parkway	Extension south of MD 6 to Old Stagecoach Road.	La Plata Comprehensive Plan		

Figure 8-3A Road Improvements

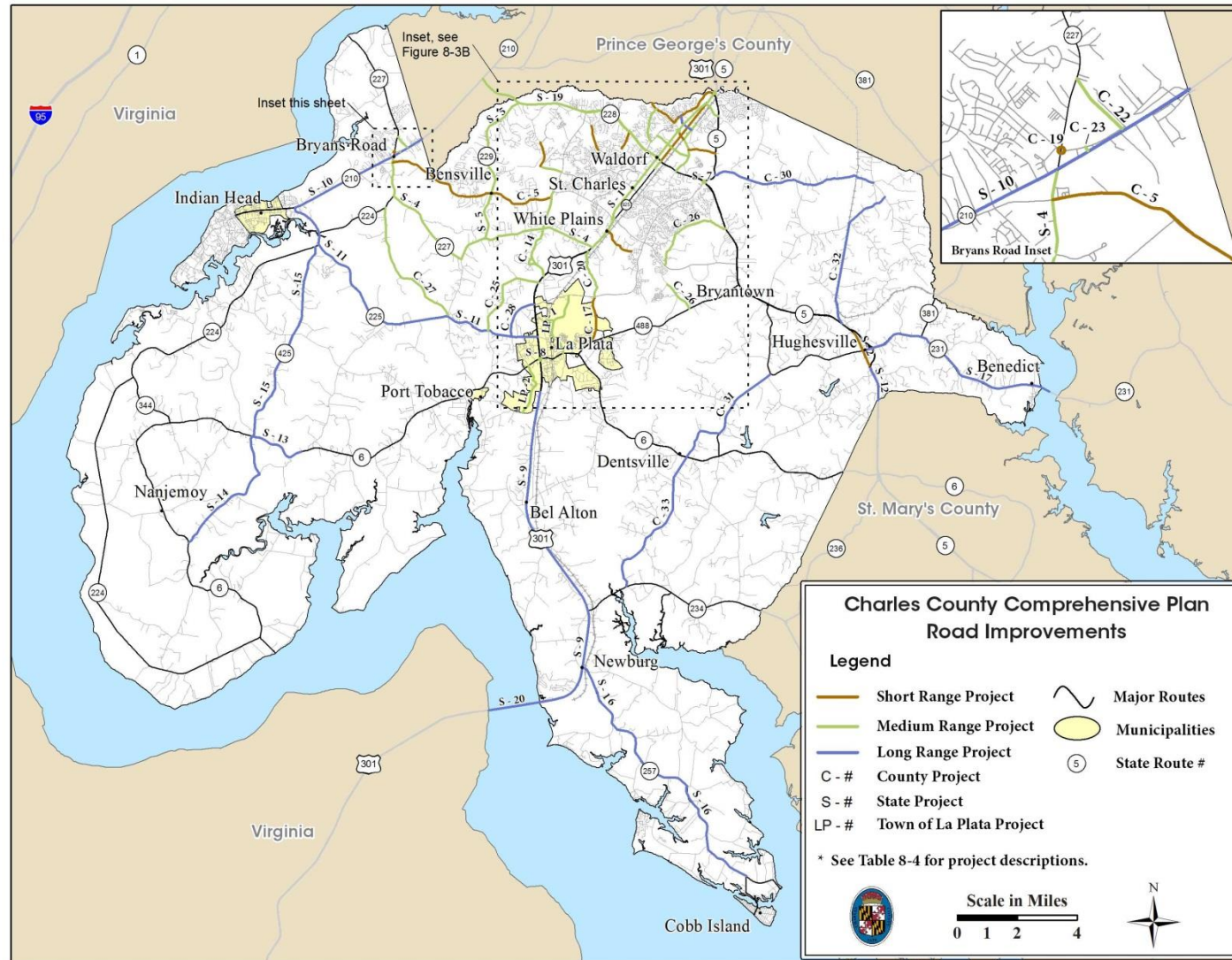


Figure 8-3B Road Improvements Waldorf/La Plata Area Inset

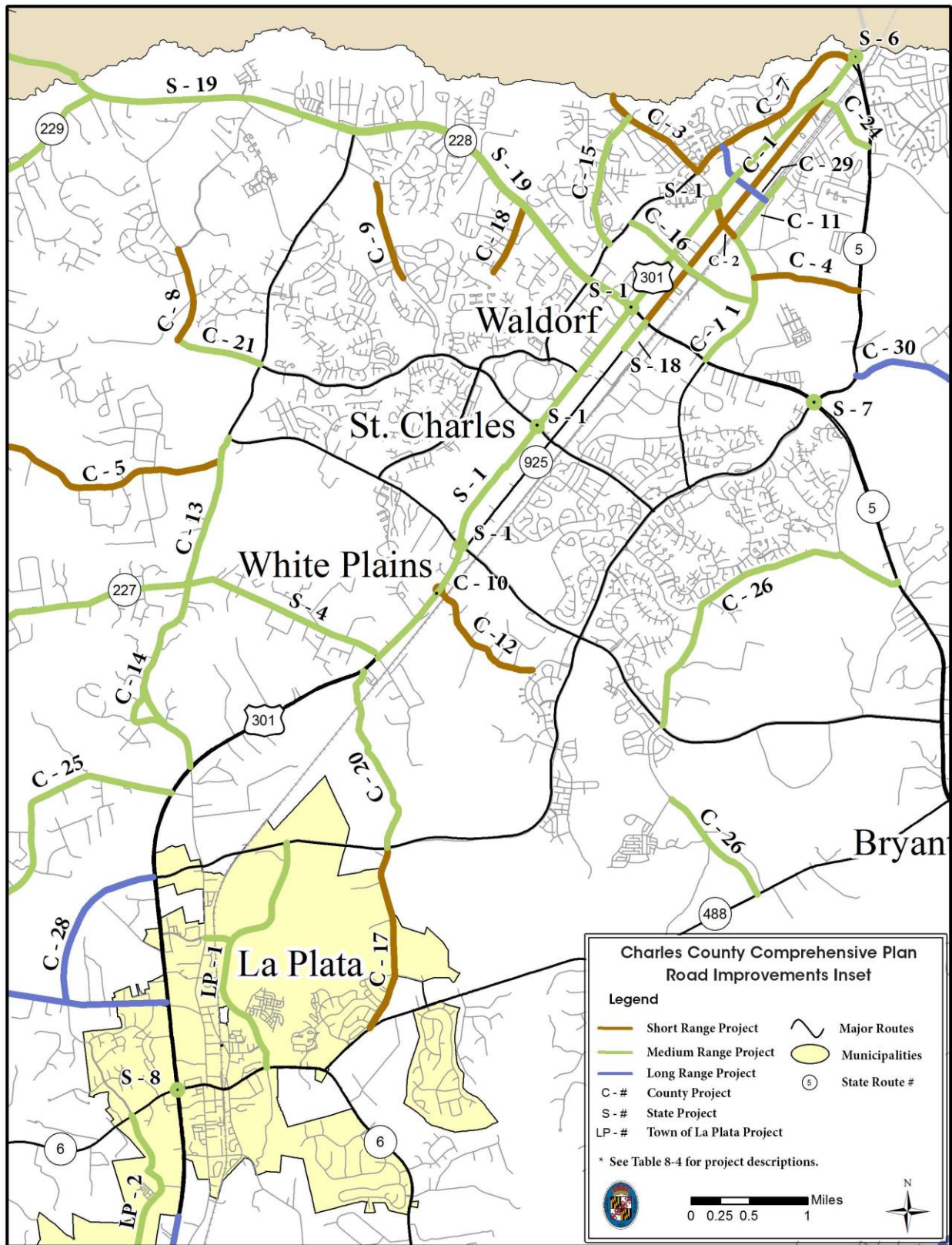


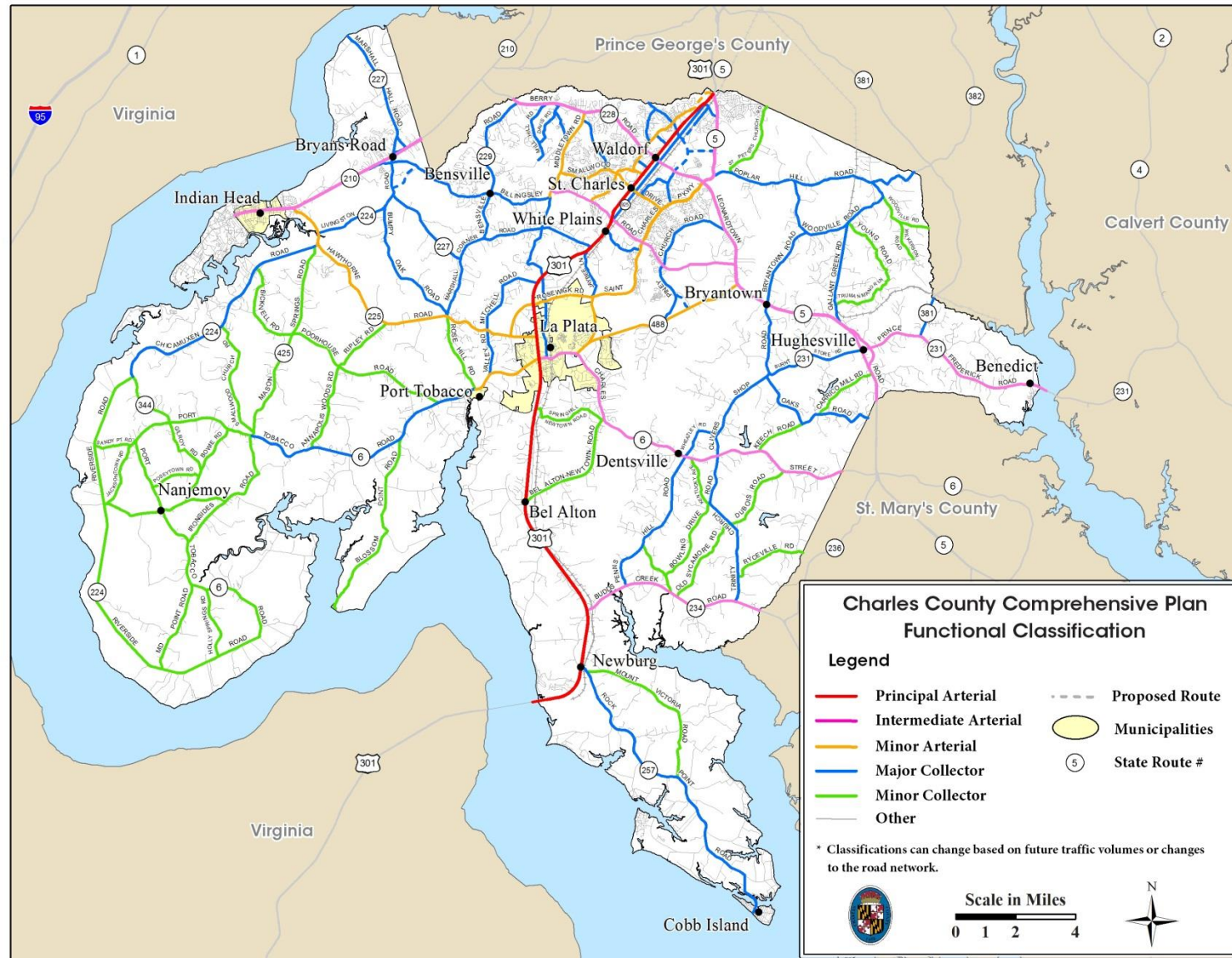
Table 8-6 Functional Classification of Highways

Road/Class	From	To	Road/Class	From	To
<i>Principal Arterial</i>			<i>Minor Arterial</i>		
US 301	Entire length		MD 6	Rose Hill Rd.	US 301
<i>Intermediate Arterial</i>			MD 225	MD 210	La Plata
MD 5	Entire length in Charles County		MD 488	MD 6	MD 5
MD 5 Business	Entire length in Charles County		Middletown Rd.	MD 228	Cross County Connector (existing)
MD 6	US 301	St. Mary's County line	Mill Hill Road Ext.	Smallwood Dr. Ext.	Davis Road
MD 210	NSFIH	Prince George's County line	Poplar Hill Rd.	MD 5	Covington Rd.
MD 228	Entire length in Charles County		Radio Station Rd.	MD 488	Rosewick Rd.
MD 231	MD 5	Patuxent River	Rosewick Rd.	US 301	Cross County Connector (existing)
MD 234	Entire length in Charles County		Saint Charles Pkwy.	Rosewick Rd.	MD 5
Cross County Connector (existing)	Middletown Road	MD 5	Saint Patrick's Dr.	US 301	Cross County Connector (existing)
			Smallwood Dr. E.	US 301	St. Charles Pkwy.
			Smallwood Dr. W.	Middletown Rd.	US 301
			Western Pkwy.	US 301	St. Patrick's Dr.
<i>Major Collector</i>					
MD 6	MD 344	Rose Hill Rd.	Matthews Rd.	MD 227	MD 210
MD 224	MD 344	MD 225	McDaniel Rd.	Middletown Rd.	Smallwood Dr. West
MD 224	MD 225	MD 227	Middletown Rd.	Cross County Connector	MD 227
MD 227	Marshall Hall	US 301	Mill Hill Rd.	MD 228	Smallwood Rd. Ext.
MD 229	MD 228	MD 227	Mitchell Rd.	US 301	MD 225
MD 257	US 301	Rock Point	Oaks Rd.	County Line	Olivers Shop Rd.
MD 344	MD 224	MD 6	Old Washington Rd.	MD 228	Sub-Station Rd.
MD 381	MD 231	Prince George's County line	Olivers Shop Rd.	MD 5	MD 6
MD 925	Cross County Connector (existing)	MD 5 (Business)	Penns Hill Rd.	MD 6	MD 234
Billingsley Rd.	MD 227	Middletown Road	Piney Church Rd.	Renner Rd.	MD 488
Bryantown Rd.	Dr. Samuel Mudd Rd.	MD 5	Plaza Dr.	Western Pkwy.	US 301

Table 8-6 Functional Classification of Highways

Road/Class	From	To	Road/Class	From	To
Bumpy Oak Rd.	MD 224	MD 225	Plaza Drive	Western Parkway	US 301
			Pomomkey to Billingsley Road	MD 227	Billingsley Road
Burnt Store Rd.	Olivers Shop Rd.	MD 5	Post Office Rd.	St. Charles Pkwy.	MD Bus 5
Camp Hedges Place	MD 227	MD 210	Post Office Rd. Ext.	MD Business 5	Old Washington Rd.
Covington Rd.	Poplar Hill Rd.	Prince George's County line	Quailwood Pkwy.	Old Stage Coach Rd.	US 301
Demarr Rd.	US 301	Rosewick Rd.	Renner Rd.	Piney Church Rd.	MD 5
Dr. Samuel Mudd Rd.	Poplar Hill Rd.	Bryantown Rd.	Springhill Newtown Rd.	MD 6	MD 301
Gallant Green Rd.	Woodville Rd.	MD 5	Sub-Station Rd.	MD 5	US 301
Hamilton Rd.	Western Pkwy.	Acton Lane	Trinity Church Rd.	MD 6	MD 234
Holly Lane	US 301	Western Terminus	Turkey Hill Rd.	MD 227	US 301
Hungerford Rd.	MD 227	MD 210	Valley Rd.	MD 225	MD 6
Industrial Park Dr.	Post Office Rd.	Copley Ave	Washington Avenue	US 301	MD 6
Iowa Rd.	Poplar Hill Rd.	Woodville Rd.	Wheatley Rd.	Olivers Shop Rd.	MD 6
Jaybee Lane	Rosewick Rd.	US 301	White Oak Dr.	Post Office Rd. Ext.	Sub-Station Rd.
Marshall Corner Rd.	MD 227	MD 225	Woodville Rd.	Iowa Rd.	Dr. Samuel Mudd Rd.

Figure 8-4 Functional Classification



As noted above, a considerable amount of pedestrian and bicycle facility planning has been undertaken in Charles County. The combined results of this planning are captured in the 2012 Charles County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. That Plan is incorporated by reference into the County's overall Transportation Plan.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan indicates a commitment of Charles County to making the County more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly. The County seeks to include bicycle and pedestrian projects in the short-term and long-term planning processes to help create connectivity. The first three chapters of this document identify a need for improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Charles County, including new facilities, upgrades to existing facilities, and links between existing facilities.

The Plan has identified current conditions, plans, reports, studies, ordinances, and guidelines currently in use by the County and Region. Chapter 2 of the Plan identifies specific goals, objectives, and priorities for moving Charles County forward with a consistent and orchestrated plan to make Charles County more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly.

The Plan also identifies specific implementation actions and future study needs. This Plan is intended to be a working document which is continuously monitored and updated to create an environment in which pedestrians and bicyclists within the County have the ability to conveniently and safely walk and ride for transportation, recreation, and fitness.

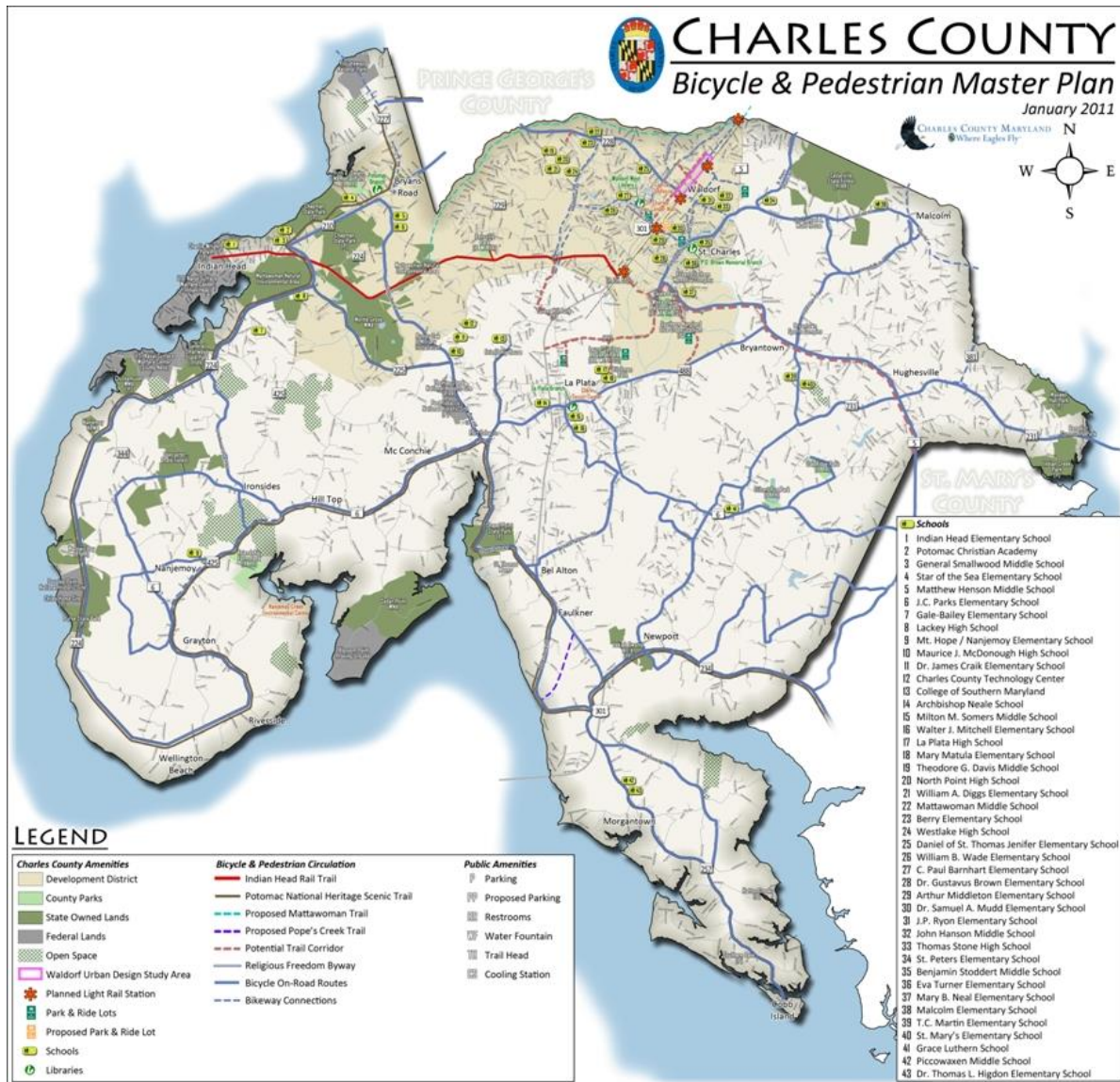
The Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Map, Figure 8-5 is based on the 2012 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and shows the overall framework of the County's existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The Map features the following in trails and routes. The major trails are:

1. **Indian Head Rail Trail.** This partly on-road, partly off-road trail follows the U.S. Government Railroad from Indian Head to White Plains following Old Woman's Run. From White Plains potential trail corridors connect to White Plains Regional Park, and follows MD 5 to Hughesville. From Hughesville the route would head towards Lexington Park via the Three Notch Trail (the former Southern MD Railroad right-of-way).
2. **Potomac National Heritage Trail.** This on-road, regional route enters the County near Bryans Road and runs roughly parallel to the Potomac River around the western and southern sides of the County and on into St. Mary's County.

The major pedestrian and bicycle routes on Figure 8-5 complete a countywide spinal system. Key elements of the system are as follows:

3. Routes along major roads serving key destinations, especially mixed-use centers in the Transit Corridor.
4. Connections between the east and west sides of US 301.

Figure 8-5 Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes



5. Connections to Bryans Road, Indian Head, and La Plata.
6. Scenic routes connecting villages on low automobile-volume roads.

Neighborhood and community sidewalks and pathways are not shown on Figure 5-5 but are important locally and should connect where possible to the countywide system.

Transit Planning

Bus Service

Charles County's 2010 Transit Development Plan (TDP) creates a blueprint for transit development in the County over the next five years. Improving the efficiency of the current system is a top priority as well as increasing service frequency and expansion of services to growth areas. The TDP found that there was little coordination between the land use approval

process and VanGO planning of bus routes. The TDP recommended that VanGO participate in reviews for new residential and commercial development along existing and future routes.

As noted above, bus service is increasing in importance in Charles County especially in the La Plata/Waldorf areas. In response to the increased demand for service the Department of Community Services is expanding the number of contractors supporting the VanGo program. The service delivery is also planned to interconnect with Prince Georges County's local bus system. There are plans to expand the function of the Smallwood Park and Ride as the main transit hub by constructing a transfer pavilion.

Park-and Ride-Lots

In order to meet the growing demand for commuter parking, the County closely coordinates with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to develop new park and ride sites to facilitate commuter needs. In many cases, the strategic planning and design of the park and ride site can facilitate the future location of planned light rail stations. The County has worked with the MTA to develop the new park and ride site and future light rail station at the intersection of MD 925 (Old Washington Road) and Smallwood Drive. This site facilitates 500 to 600 commuter parking spaces, with a planned future light rail station platform adjacent to the identified transit corridor. The County has also planned a park and ride facility as part of the Waldorf Gateway Transit Oriented Development project, located along the transit corridor and Substation Road in northern Waldorf. This location will serve both local bus and commuter bus services, with and ultimate development as the first light rail station as you enter Charles County from the north.

The County continues to seek additional park and ride facilities for both short term and long term uses, including the development of future light rail stations along the adopted transit alignment corridor.

Commuter Rail Service

The Charles County Commissioner's highest longterm transportation priority is the construction of the fixed-route high capacity transit service (Light Rail) from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains. To ensure the local commitment to the Maryland Department of Transportation, the County has committed local funds to the project to meet the Federal funding requirements. The project has been included in the State's capital funding program, known as the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). The Maryland Transit Administration, Prince George's County and Charles County have jointly applied for Federal funds to initiate the Planning Phase of the project. The completion of the Planning Phase will determine a specific alignment through the Alternatives Analysis process, and enable the project to complete the Federal Environmental Impact Analysis process and Preliminary Engineering. Once completed, this project will be eligible for additional Federal funds for detailed engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and construction.

These plans are based on the 2010 Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study (2010) which identified the alignment corridor for future development into a high capacity transitway along the MD 5/ US 301 Corridor from Waldorf/White Plains to the Branch Avenue Metrorail station in Prince George's County. (See Figures 8-6 and 8-7)

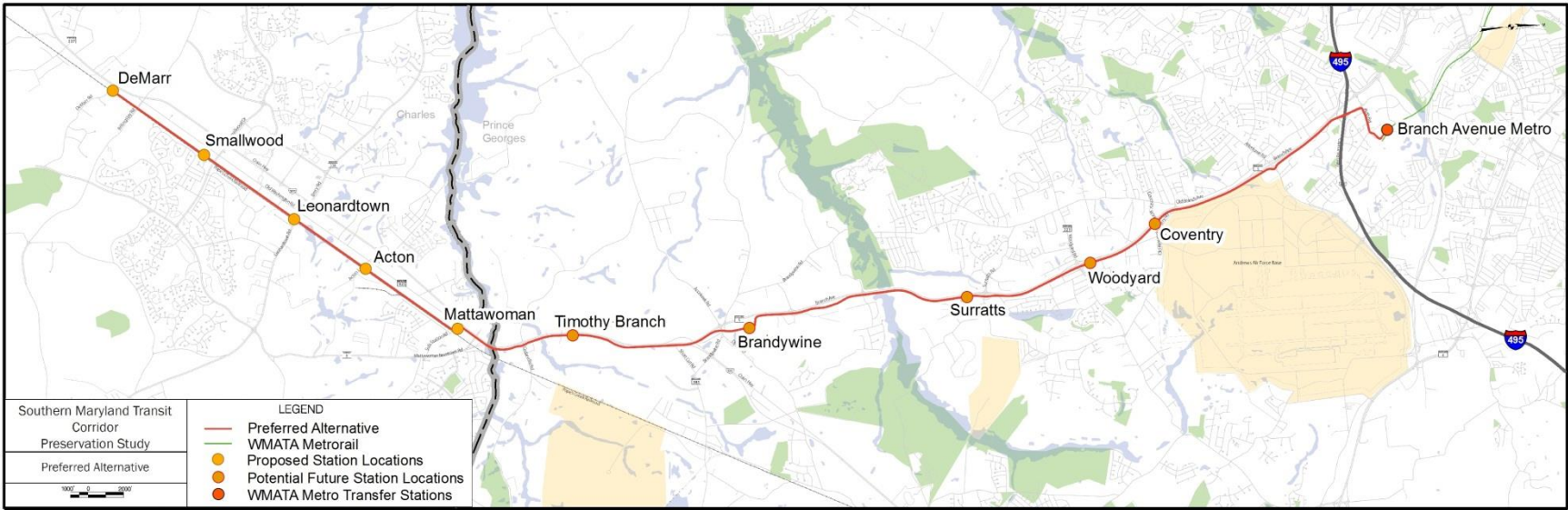
The Preservation Study acted as a guiding tool that determined the locations of potential transit stations, parking and other facilities, and provides Charles and Prince George's counties with a specific transit alignment to protect in their local land use plans. The Preservation Study notes

that a successful transit corridor requires proactive planning on the part of the local jurisdiction to plan and execute transit supportive land uses and a transportation vision for the corridor which is integrated into the county's Master Plan and other appropriate land use policy documents. Acting now to preserve a transit right-of-way in the study area is the first step towards reaching the goal of a future transit system along the MD 5/US 301 corridor.

This 2016 Comprehensive Plan responds to the Preservation Study by designating a transit corridor on Land Use Plan Map as a sub-area of the Development District, surrounding and including the business and commercial centers along US 301 from Waldorf to White Plains. This area encourages an integrated mix of medium to high density residential, business, and employment uses in a compact, well-designed, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environment (see Chapter 3).

To support the Plans for Light Rail Transit Service to Waldorf/White Plains, the County concurrently completed the 2010 Waldorf Urban Design Study which sets forth a vision for a study area comprising the Acton and Waldorf Activity centers, two of four activity centers identified in the Waldorf Sub-Area Plan. The County adopted the new transit-oriented, mixed-use zoning and the associated design code to determine the uses and scale of the re-development. The new zoning code re-creates Waldorf as a vibrant downtown community where businesses and residential uses are integrated as a walkable community. To strategically plan the local infrastructure investment and provide the necessary incentives for re-development, the County completed a comprehensive evaluation of local transportation improvements through the Waldorf Urban Transportation Improvement Plan (WUTIP). The WUTIP provides cost estimates and a planned prioritization of local investments in capital construction of several roadway and other transportation improvements. Following this analysis in 2011, the County began an additional Infrastructure Study in the form of an implementation plan for the water, sewer, stormwater, and other infrastructure. The Infrastructure Study included an analysis of structured parking to serve the development/re-development of the area now being referred to as the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor.

Figure 8-6 Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study



Water Transportation

A commuter water taxi service has been an alternative mode of transportation that has been studied by jurisdictions on both sides of the Potomac River since the late 1990's. In 2010, Prince William County Virginia completed a Commuter Ferry Study, in partnership with Fairfax County Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Charles County Maryland, to determine the travel times and vessel types for this type of service. The results indicated that the service could achieve significant time advantages for commuters over roadway travel times. However, shore-side infrastructure would be needed at the port locations in order for the service to be feasible.

Operations of this service were envisioned to be private, similar to taxi cab services. In 2011, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission received a grant to complete a Commuter Ferry Market Study, including contributions from Charles County and several Virginia jurisdictions. The Study results were completed in 2013 and found that the short distance routes were the most feasible options in the short term (National Harbor to DC Waterfront for example). For locations like Indian Head, Maryland and Woodbridge Virginia, it was found that they would have less likely success rate once the short distance services were well established. These farther locations were suggested to be long term options.

Policies and Actions

Policies

Roadway Network/Capacity

- 8.1 Direct the highway program toward the preservation of peak period capacities at acceptable levels along arterials such as US 301, MD 210, MD 228, and MD 5 through the careful application of access management and the development of a supporting network to separate local traffic.
- 8.2 Require land developers to pay for any alterations, improvements, or additions to public roads and other facilities that will be needed to support the proposed development and will not be provided by normal County programming, including, but not limited to roads, entrances, deceleration and turning lanes, inter-parcel connections for subdivisions, signals, and park-and-ride lots.
- 8.3 Continue to pursue inter-jurisdictional efforts to address transportation issues in key corridors especially US 301.

Land Use

- 8.4 Plan improvements to the overall County transportation network to correspond to and support the overall land use plan.
- 8.5 Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the County's Development Districts.
- 8.6 Limit transportation improvements in Rural Conservation and Agricultural Preservation Districts to essential capacity improvements as well as maintenance and upgrading of non-standard roads and under-capacity bridges. This objective will provide for a safe and functional road system while limiting development in these rural areas.

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 8.7 Reduce the number of trips by single occupancy vehicles through Transportation Demand Management programs, expanded commuter bus systems, ride-share programs, carpool and vanpool programs, and additional park-and-ride lots.
- 8.8 Promote and expand existing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs including telecommuting and teleservices which directly reduce commuter trips. Examples of TDM programs include employee vanpool programs, home-based ridesharing programs, local area paratransit program, new and improved park and ride lots, flexible work hours, transit-oriented developments, bicycle /pedestrian facilities, and telework centers.
- 8.9 The County supports the continued operation of Maryland Airport.

Capital Programming, Coordination

- 8.10 Structure the financial policy for the transportation system to achieve the overall goals of the County. In addition to federal and state funding sources, innovative mechanisms, including private cooperation and financial support by developers should be incorporated into financial policies.
- 8.11 Foster close coordination between the County, Maryland Department of Transportation, and the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland on matters related to planning and programming improvements transportation systems management, and whenever necessary, pursue legislative incentives on a coordinated basis.

Actions

- 1. Develop a standalone Countywide Transportation Master Plan for Charles County.
- 2. Develop a transportation model to help identify the functional classification of roads, identify problem links in the road network, and assist in preparing advanced planning studies thereby supplementing the Comprehensive Plan and the ongoing work of the Planning Commission.
- 3. Continue to develop access management plans for County roads and incorporate these plans into the County road ordinance.
- 4. Continue to coordinate with the State Highway Administration on access management programs along US 301, MD 228, MD 5, and MD 210, and on a case-by-case basis when new development and redevelopment plans are proposed. Review access control policy along US 301 with SHA in light of this 2012 Comprehensive Plan not including a western US 301 bypass.
- 5. Preserve right-of-way and require road improvements consistent with the Road Improvements Map, Functional Classification Map, and the concept circulation plans to be developed for specific areas. Sections 75, 76, and 83 of the Subdivision Regulations provide for reservation and dedication of right-of-way and roadway upgrades and Section 38 of the Zoning Ordinance limits construction of buildings in planned acquisition limits.

6. Continue to develop advanced planning studies in priority areas to prepare conceptual plans, identify future roadway corridors, existing roadways to be improved, and other measures such as access management, or transit improvements. This will allow the County to use the Adequate Public Facilities requirements, subdivision regulations, and zoning ordinance requirements to preserve right-of-way and implement improvements in an orderly manner over time.
7. Implement the recommendations of the 2012 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Implement needed pedestrian/bicycle improvements in existing communities and incorporate pedestrian-bicycle facilities into future road projects using Figure 8-5 as a guide for location.
8. Include a new hiker-biker trail to replace phases V, VI and VII of the Cross County Connector road project in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and for future Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding.
9. Preserve right-of-way for future transit ways and acquire parking lots/park and ride sites at future rail stations. Locations are shown in the Waldorf Urban Design Study.
10. Incorporate VanGO into reviews for new residential and commercial development along existing and future transit routes. The role would include:
 - Ensuring that new development is designed to accommodate transit services.
 - Identifying new transit trip generators.
 - Planning for pedestrian and bicycle access around bus stops.
11. Implement the findings and recommendations from the Maryland Airport Land Use Plan which was completed in 2015. (See additional detail under Actions in Chapter 3)
12. Participate in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Transportation Planning Board to coordinate local policies and improvements with regional transportation plans and programs.